

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9465

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T OSLO 1140

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, MASS, NO, NATO

SUBJ: AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT ISSUE

FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER AND SECRETARY SCHLESINGER

SECDEF HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

SUMMARY: CABINET HAS APPROVED NORWEGIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE FOUR-NATION CONSORTIUM TO COPRODUCE THE F-16, ACCORDING TO PRIME MINISTER. SOME NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US AND CONSORTIUM PARTNERS WILL BE REQUIRED. MARCH 24 MEETING POSTPONED UNTIL APRIL 3. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER BRATTELI INFORMED ME AT LUNCHEON TODAY THAT THE NORWEGIAN CABINET HAS ENDORSED A COURSE OF ACTION FOR NORWAY PREDICATED ON PARTICIPATION IN THE FOUR-NATION CONSORTIUM TO COPRODUCE THE FM' IN EUROPE WITH RECOGNITION THAT A DECISION IS REQUIRED BY MAY 15. THE PRIME MINISTER ACKNOWLEDGES THAT SOME NEGOTIATIONS WILL PROBABLY BE REQUIRED WITH THE US AND CONSORTIUM PARTNERS OVER THE LANGUAGE OF MOU (PRESUMABLY ON COSTS OF POSSIBLE TERMINATION).

2. I ALSO LEARNED FROM THE PRIME MINISTER THAT HE

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HAS CONTRACTED THE LEADERS OF THE FOUR MAJOR PARTIES,

CONSERVATIVE, CENTER, CHRISTIAN PEOPLE'S AND HIS OWN LABOR PARTY, AND HE REPORTS THAT THEY ARE ALL "ON BOARD". BRATTELI REITERATED THAT THE DEFENSE COMMISSION MUST BE ABLE TO RETAIN ITS FREEDOM OF ACTION, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO THE BUDGETARY CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH A MAJOR DECISION AS AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT. INsofar AS DOMESTIC POLITICS AND ROLE OF DEFENSE COMMISSION ARE CONCERNED, BRATTELI DECLARED THAT THIS IS NOW MAOOER OF PROCEDURE RATHER THAN SUBSTANCE.

3. BRATTELI WAS MOST OPTIMISITC, OBSERVING THAT THE EARLIER SITUATION HAD SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGED AND "GREAT PROGRESS" HAS BEEN MADE.

4. OF BROADER INTEREST, PRIME MINISTER ADVISED ME THAT THE MOD MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 24 IN BRUSSELS HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL APRIL 3. I HAVE SINCE LEARNED FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT THE POSTPONEMENT WAS MADE AT BELGIAN REQUEST.

5. IN VIEW OF CONTENTS OF PARA 4, DEPARTMENT, AT ITS DISCRETION, MAY WISH TO REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO COPENHAGEN, BRUSSELS AND THE HAGUE. BYRNE

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Message Attributes

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